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AF/S FOR B. NEULING
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#) [ZANU](#) [PF](#)
SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE MOYO ON ELECTIONS

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher W. Dell under Section 1.4 b/d

Summary

1. (C) Controversial independent MP candidate Jonathan Moyo on March 22 told a visiting U.S. Congressional staff delegation and an Embassy election observer that ZANU-PF was a spent force.⁸ He described ZANU-PF as a party of tribalists with no direction. Moyo also expressed little regard for the MDC leadership but predicted the opposition would do well in the election. Following the elections, he foresaw the possible emergence of a third party that could take power by uniting independents like himself with elements from the two parties.

Moyo Predicts Electoral Surprise

2. (C) Independent candidate for the Tsholotsho parliamentary seat and former Information Minister Jonathan Moyo met at his campaign office with visiting Staffdel from the House International Relations Committee, Pearl-Alice Marsh and Malik Chaka, and USAID staff accredited to observe the election. While initially pleading time constraints due to the campaign, Moyo was clearly anxious to speak with the USG delegation and seemed eager to engage.

3. (C) Moyo stated that he thought ZANU-PF was a spent force and would be surprised by the election. He thought the MDC would do particularly well in the provinces of Masvingo, Mashonaland West, and Manicaland) all rural areas and traditional ZANU-PF strongholds. According to Moyo, the ZANU-PF leadership might have been lulled into complacency due to the lack of reporting of MDC activities in the press and had mistakenly concluded that the MDC had been crushed. He added that ZANU-PF had also badly weakened itself as a result of the Party Congress in December 2004, which would further contribute to an electoral surprise and he dismissed their anti-Blair campaign (which he had helped start) as ineffective, noting that many rural constituents had asked him just who was this &Auntie Blair.⁸

Assesses the Two Parties

4. (C) Moyo said that the lack of diversity in the ZANU-PF leadership had also hurt the party. Without criticizing President Mugabe, he said the party had become &tribal,⁸ with the Zezuru clan triumphant. He concluded that the succession process in ZANU-PF was complete and that Joyce Mujuru would be the next leader. However, the real power was with her husband, Solomon Mujuru. Moyo decried this as &undemocratic bedroom politics⁸. He added that he was sure Mugabe would not run for president in 2008 and, if he did, that he would lose.

5. (C) Regarding the MDC, Moyo said the party's leadership was weak but he gave them credit for having the foresight to not expose their weakness by holding a party congress before the parliamentary election. He said it would be difficult for the MDC to lead the nation because it was not perceived as &nationalist⁸ due to its heavy reliance on outside support, including support from the U.S. Nevertheless, the MDC had a very good chance of winning a large number of seats.

Moyo,s Plans

6. (C) In Tsholotsho, he cast the contest as between the MDC candidate and himself, but predicted he would be victorious. He said he still maintained contacts with ZANU-PF but had also reached out to elements of the MDC. He said if the MDC and independent candidates, including himself, won a combined total of more than 60 seats, it could result in a &constitutional crisis⁸ since ZANU-PF would have lost a majority of the seats being contested. In that event, Moyo foresaw the emergence of a third force drawing MPs from both

parties that could take power and unite the country.

17. (C) Moyo said that if he lost his election, he would likely turn to writing and would try to remain in politics until the presidential elections in 2008. He was coy about whether he would run himself for president. Towards the end of the meeting, Moyo noted that he was "proud of his American education" and said he remained in contact with people at Stanford University where he had studied, and where he might like to one day teach.

Comment

18. (C) The ruling party has made a priority of defeating Moyo, who was counted out by many after his fall from grace. Nonetheless, he is now favored by most to win the Tsholotsho seat from a weak MDC incumbent. Moyo's "Senator Pothole" constituent-centered campaign style, perhaps a side-effect of his time in the U.S., has had an impact and is being emulated by both candidates of both parties. Moyo was clearly formerly the brains behind the ZANU-PF national campaign, which has floundered without him. More than the other "young Turks" recently purged from ZANU-PF, this enormously ambitious and energetic figure may yet find a way to play an important - if unpredictable - role in Zimbabwean politics.
Dell